

# Rural Water Issues Advisory [10/7/2019]

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**EPA to Announce NEW Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) on Thursday:** Speculation in Washington last week was that EPA will release their LCR proposal this Thursday in Wisconsin. Last week, EPA Administrator Wheeler said that the updated regulations on lead in drinking water will be unveiled this month. The proposal has been pending at EPA for more than eight years and the existing rules have been in effect since 1991. Wheeler has continually focused on how to implement the replacement of lead service lines without placing an unmanageable financial burden on the water utilities that own them - and how to ensure the most corrosive lead pipes across the country were prioritized for removal first. In 2017, EPA asked NRWA for recommended changes to the rule ([EPA 2017 announcement](#)). EPA has categorized the issues within the rule to 5 changes known as “Key Areas for Rule Revisions”:

1. Lead Service Line Replacement (LSLR),
2. Corrosion Control Treatment,
3. Tap Sampling,
4. Public Education and Transparency and
5. Copper Requirements (see EPA’s [presentation slides](#)).

NRWA in its [March 8, 2017 comments](#) urged EPA to fundamentally modify the current LCR to reflect the principle of shared responsibility. *“Unfortunately, much of the local opposition to the current rule is based on its arbitrary and uniform mandates that result in many communities believing many of the rule’s requirements are unnecessary or diverting the community from implementing the most effective policy from preventing lead in drinking water... To ensure the greatest possible future success and the greatest possible public health protection, any new rule should be a shared responsibility, meaning local governments and local populations should agree the resulting policies are necessary, tailored to local conditions, and result in a commensurate public health benefit... EPA should decouple tap sampling requirements from utility compliance and allow drinking water utilities to demonstrate compliance with CCT requirements through water quality parameter sampling within the public water system,”* NRWA said in the comments. NRWA also warned against any LSL replacement mandate that would extend to lines on private property.

## **Florida Rural Water Association (FRWA) to Lead on New EPA Lead Testing in School Program:**

EPA is finalizing their awards to states to implement their voluntary grant program to assist local and tribal educational agencies and child care programs in testing for lead in drinking water at schools and child care programs ([EPA](#)). EPA has noted that all 50 states are participating. FRWA is participating in the program in Florida that is scheduled to begin on November 1, 2019. FRWA’s 6 state-supported Circuit Riders will assist in the Lead in Schools program in cooperation with their state drinking water agency. FRWA Circuit Riders will be helping schools collect samples, get them tested at the lab, interpret the results and help with necessary actions. FRWA will be coordinating both the drinking water and state education agencies for school selection or voluntary “Join the Program” action. FRWA will also be assisting water utilities with public education and publicity resulting from the tests. Water utilities are participating to ensure the testing, flushing, and assessment of schools’ on-premise plumbing is appropriate.

**Biosolids as Fertilizer Questioned:** *“Americans send about 300 million pounds of waste daily from the nation’s toilets to wastewater treatment plants. Now the practice is behind a growing number of public health problems. Spreading pollutant-filled biosolids on farmland is making people sick, contaminating drinking water and filling crops, livestock and humans with everything from pharmaceuticals to PFAS ([Guardian](#)).”*

**Environmental Working Group (EWG):** “EPA’s Administrator Wheeler’s clear message to Americans is to let them drink polluted water... failed communities struggling with PFAS pollution... has done nothing to reduce ongoing releases of PFAS into the air and water... ([The Hill](#)).”

**The Closing of Rural Hospitals ([GQ](#)) and the Closing of Rural Grocery Stores ([PEW Foundation](#)).**

**Local Coalition in New Hampshire Sues the State Over New State PFAS Regulations ([statement](#)).**

**North Carolina Health Officials Confirmed 116 Cases of Legionnaires’ Disease:** Epidemiologists investigating hot tub display at a fair ([Circle of Blue](#)).

**DC Hospital Turns Off Water System After Detecting Legionella ([WashPost](#)).**

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**National Rural Water Association**

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**The National Rural Water Association** is the country’s largest public drinking water and sanitation supply organization with over 30,000 members. Safe drinking water and sanitation are generally recognized as the most essential public health, public welfare, and civic necessities.

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